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East Bay Economic Development Alliance
The bright side of the San Francisco Bay

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May 14, 2008

Honorable Denise Ducheny
Chair, Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5035
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable John Laird
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Legislators:

As representatives of the business and residential communities served by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), we are pleased to see the Legislature taking action to secure the State's water supplies in the face of challenging circumstances. The State has recognized the central importance of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in providing ecosystem and export water supply benefits through the Delta Vision process. In the midst of so many urgent issues in the Delta, EBMUD's Mokelumne Aqueducts have typically been overlooked as an essential element of the public infrastructure located in the Delta. These aqueducts provide 90% of the municipal and industrial water supply to 1.3 million people in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

EBMUD's aqueducts cross five Delta islands that are below sea level, protected by 51 miles of earthen levees that must continuously hold back the Delta waters. As we saw in the June 2004 rupture of the levee on Upper Jones Tract – which these aqueducts cross – these levees could fail at any time.

The Bay Area's economy depends on the water that is delivered through the aqueducts, and any failure of the levees puts that economy at risk. The best near-term protection against this threat is increased investment in the levees that protect the aqueducts. EBMUD is currently investing over \$1.5 million annually to help reclamation districts maintain and improve these levees, but more work is needed and the pace of improvement must be accelerated.

The levees protecting EBMUD's aqueducts need \$120 million in investments to meet Army Corps standards for agricultural levees. These improvements will also provide benefits to other State assets including vital transportation infrastructure (Highway 4, the BNSF rail line, shipping routes) electricity, oil and gas lines, and water export conveyance channels.

As you consider the recommendations of the Delta Vision process and make decisions affecting the future of the Delta, EBMUD's aqueducts and the levee system protecting them should be recognized as worthy of State investment along with the export projects and other critical public assets. Failure to promptly appropriate the available funds to protect this vital infrastructure places both the Bay Area's and the State's economy at significant risk. Thank you for your attention to these critical funding needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith Carson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Keith Carson, Chair
East Bay EDA

Cc:

Honorable Senate President pro Tem Don Perata

Members of the Senate Budget Committee

Members of the Assembly Budget Committee

Alameda and Contra Costa County Legislative Delegations

Mike Chrisman, Secretary, California Resources Agency

Karen Scarborough, Undersecretary, California Resources Agency

Lester Snow, Director, California Department of Water Resources

Joe Grindstaff, Director, California Bay-Delta Authority

✓ Phil Isenberg, Chair, Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force

Lesla R. McIntosh, President, Board of Directors, East Bay Municipal Utility District

Lynn M. Suter, Lynn M. Suter & Associates